

REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
Present Posture  
OF  
AFFAIRS:  
With Relation to the  
Treaty of PEACE,  
Now on Foot.  
In a LETTER to a Friend.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. Churchill, at the Black-  
Swan in Pater-Noster-Row. 1712.

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## *Reflections upon the Present Posture of Affairs, &c.*

SIR,  
**T**HE Congress of the Plenipotentiaries appointed to negotiate a General Peace, being now open'd at *Utrecht*, I do not at all wonder that you are desirous to know the Sense of the wise and impartial part of Mankind in this Conjunction. In Obedience to your Commands, I have made what Enquiries I could, and from those Persons whom you desir'd me to consult. Upon those Enquiries I have made such Observations as appear'd the most natural to me; which Observations I here send you.

In the first Place then, I find all Men universally pleas'd at Her Majesty's Message of *Jan. 17.* to the Two Houses of Parliament; in which She assur'd Them, That there should be no *Separate*



*rate Peace*, and that the Particulars of the Negotiation *should be laid before Them*. For tho' Her Majesty had just Cause to complain of those who had spread such groundless Reports, yet there seem'd to be Reason to fear that too great a Handle had been given for those Reports. Messengers had pass'd between *Great Britain and France*, without the Privy of some of the Confederates, and Overtures had been made from the *French* to Her Majesty; which Overtures had been publicly Printed at *London*, and dispersed from thence throughout *Europe*. This had alarm'd some of the *Higb Allies*; and his Electoral Highness of *Hanover* in particular, (who had a distinct Reason from any other of the Allies, to interpose in such a Matter,) had declar'd his Sense of that whole Affair, in a Memorial presented by his Minister, the *Baron de Botbmar*, to our Court. This is all known and publick.

These Apprehensions were not lessen'd by the discharging my Lord Duke of *M——* at this particular Time. Men reflected upon the Fears and Apprehensions which they had in the Year 1702. *K. Philip* was not only quietly possess'd of



of the *Spanish Monarchy*, but the whole *Spanish Netherlands* were actually in *French Hands*. The *United Provinces* were harder press'd than they had ever been since the *D. of Parma's* Time: And *England* by the Death of *K. William* of Glorious Memory, was thrown into an unspeakable Consternation. *Germany* expected every Moment that the *Electors* of *Bavaria* and *Cologne* would join with *France*, and thereby either kindle a Civil War in the Empire, or stop the Emperor and his Friends from making any Efforts to save themselves, or assist us. They remember'd, that even in the first Year of the War, the Confederate Army under the Duke of *M——* clear'd the *Maese*, from *Maestricht* down as low as *Holland*; that the next Year by taking *Liege* and *Huy*, they clear'd it upwards as high as *Namur*; and this too, when the Enemy was in full Possession of his ancient Glory, and had not yet lost one single *Battle*: And that by this Means the Barrier towards the Empire was secur'd, and the *Elector* of *Cologne*, who had then openly declar'd for *France*, was hindred from joining him on that Side. Afterwards when the *Elector* of *Bavaria* had already kindled a Civil War in

in the Empire, and call'd the *French* into *Germany*, when nothing less than de-throning the Emperor, and placing the *Bavarian* in his Seat, was expected, they with Thankfulness to Almighty God, look'd back upon the memorable Expedition of His Grace into *Germany* in 1704, where he forc'd the *Bavarian* Lines at *Schellenberg*, and after that (in Conjunction with the *Imperial* Forces) obtain'd that Glorious Victory at *Blenheim*. They had not forgot the Fears the whole Nation were in at that Time, lest he should have miscarry'd; and with Pleasure saw the Honours and Rewards which he receiv'd from his **QUEEN** and Country at his Return. They recollected that the next Year, tho' there were no Battles fought, nor Towns won in *Flanders*, yet the *French* Lines were forc'd; their boasted Secu-rities thereby made useless; and they were taught to observe, that no Bar-riers could keep back the Confederate Army led on by such a General. They remember'd that this was signally veri-fy'd in the Year 1706, when after the Victory of *Ramellies*, *Brabant* surren-der'd, in a manner, without striking Stroke; and by the taking of *Menin*, a  
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Door was open'd into the *Old Conquests* ; and consequently that the Allies might reasonably hope in no long time to penetrate into *France* its self. They could easily then look back to the Battle of *Oudenard*, to the taking of *Lille*, of *Tournay*, of *Douay*, of *Aire*, and *Bethune* ; to the Battle of *Malplaquet*, where the *French* gave way, tho' fortified by three Intrenchments ; and to the Siege of *Bouchain*, which was taken in sight of a superior Army within Canon-shot of the Place. This wonderful Series of Successes perform'd by a Confederate Army, headed for Ten Campaigns together by One Man, and those following upon the Neck of one another, without receiving one single Foil in any thing which he ever undertook, to lessen his, or their Glory ; made most People take it for granted, that a Peace was as good as concluded, or that otherwise he would not have been set aside.

Herein then we are happily deceiv'd. We do not distrust Her Majesty, or Her Parliament. We know She will do nothing to the Prejudice of Her People, to whom She has been all along such a tender and affectionate Mother ; and we are confident that a *British Parliament* will



will never advise Her Majesty to enter into such Measures as shall be destructive to the Religious and Civil Liberties of their own triumphant and (if they please) happy Country.

But still the Events of War are uncertain. *The Battle is not always to the Strong, nor the Race to the Swift.* This long and expensive War has in a good measure exhausted us. The whole Nation, in general, except some very few that get by these Commotions, sigh for Peace. The Allies are tir'd as well as we; and even the *Dutch* themselves, whatsoever some may tell us, would no doubt be glad to see themselves quietly possess'd of that noble *Barrier*, which by this War they have obtain'd. What therefore may be the Issue of this *Negotiation*, no mortal Man can I believe foresee; nor in whose Hands *Spain* and the *West Indies* will at last be left. And if we should be forc'd to relinquish them to the *House of Bourbon*, it may not be amiss to enquire, *First*, What may be the Consequences of that Acquisition: *Secondly*, What Condition we are in to guard our selves against those Consequences: And *Lastly*, What will be the likeliest Means to prevent those Evils,

Evils, of which we may then so reasonably be afraid.

If *Spain*, and the *West Indies* shou'd be continu'd to the *House of Bourbon*, all thinking Men must allow, that the Riches of the *West Indies* will be in a great Measure in the Power of *France*. The *Spaniards* have not Fleets of their Own, sufficient to fetch home their Money; or to defend it, in case of opposition, without the assistance of *France*. The *French* will make what Settlements they please in *America*; they will put what Cloggs they have a mind upon every Branch of that Trade; and when once they have got Breath, and recruited themselves with *American Wealth*, they will have it in their Power to give Laws to the rest of *Europe*. But we are told there is no fear of that: The *Spanish* Monarchy will be King *Philip's* own; and he will not, to aggrandize a Brother, unnecessarily weaken himself. Interest only governs Crown'd Heads; their own Interest, or their Peoples, which in good Princes is inseparable; and Blood in those Cases has little or no influence. Very true: But I wou'd be glad to know, who of us can tell what Engagements King *Philip* has not already enter'd

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into

into with the Crown of *France*, and what Advantages he has not already Stipulated to give it, in case he can secure *Spain* and the *West-Indies* to himself by its means. It is plain that without the Assistance of *France* he cou'd not stand one Year. Are the *French* so careless of their Own Interest, as not at least to take care to be reimburs'd for the immense Sums which they have expended to set King *Philip* upon the *Spanish* Throne? Or has the King of *France* been all along so negligent of his Domestic Affairs, as only to fight for Glory; without ever shewing any Regard to the Recompence of Reward? Or, supposing that a Grandfather may be so passionately fond of his Family, as to hazard his own Kingdom to acquire a greater for his second Grandson; yet is it likely that the eldest Grandson will not take care that his Inheritance shall not be undone by the Bargain? The *French* King is now in the 74th Year of his Age, and his Grandson the *Dauphin* is almost 30. The one is *too Old to dictate*, and the other is *too Old to be brow-beaten*. If Courtiers are said to worship the rising Sun, they certainly will be more in  
Awe



Awe of the Sun when it shines with its Meridian Lustre ; especially when the descending *Luminary* is by the Natural Revolution of Things near its last Declension. To lay aside Allegories ; It is ridiculous to imagine, that the *Dauphin* will consent to ruin his own Glorious and Patrimonial Kingdom, to acquire one for his Brother, when he might be quiet and happy at home, without a full and ample Equivalent. He will say too, and not unjustly, that without such an Equivalent he cannot secure to his Brother *Philip* the *Spanish Monarchy*, when he is once set upon it. How can I (will he reasonably say) secure the *West Indies* to my Brother of *Spain*, in case of a sudden and unforeseen Rupture with the Maritime Powers, unless I have cautionary Towns in *Mexico*, or *Peru*, or some of the *Spanish Islands* in *America*, deliver'd to me for a Refuge and Harbour to my Fleets, which must be sent thither to secure his Dominions in case of an Attack ? These are natural Consequences of such a Partition in its self, and then it will be easie to see what must be the Consequences of it to us,

We may depend upon it, as no *Nation* has provoked *France* to a greater Degree than we have done, so no People would, if a good occasion shou'd offer it self, feel the Weight of its Resentment more than our selves. In King *James* the II<sup>d</sup>'s Time, the *French* were sure if not of the Assistance, yet of the Neutrality of *England*; and what they were then able to do, we see by what they actually did after the late happy Revolution; when *England* joyn'd with all its Weight, together with the *High Allies*, to oppose them. They have no way to be revenged upon us, and at the same time to consult their own Interests, so effectually, as by giving us a *King*, who by Interest and Principles will be obliged to stand by them. There is no fear but this will be provided against by the present Treaty, as fully as can be provided by Human Prudence. All honest Men confide in Her Majesty; the Allies will undoubtedly be reciprocal *Guarantees* for one another's Security. This, under God, shou'd the worst come to the worst, we may reasonably hope will preserve us. But still the *French* will be daily gathering Strength by the flowing in of *American* Wealth,

Wealth, and how long the *Alliance* will hold together, when once they feel the Sweets of Peace, no Man at this Distance can possibly foresee.

Now if we shou'd enquire into the Condition that we are in to guard ourselves against these Consequences, I am afraid it will be found to be very indifferent. Under K. *James* the 1<sup>st</sup>. when *Papery* broke in upon us like a Land-Flood, the Nation was firm and united within it self. The Nobility and Gentry courageously withstood the Inroads that were made upon their Religion and Liberties. When it was propos'd that the *Test* and *Penal Laws* shou'd be repeal'd, in order to make way for such a Legal Toleration of *Papery*, as wou'd lay all Honours and Preferments open equally to Men of that Communion; We saw that neither Menaces, nor Persuasions, cou'd induce the Gentlemen of *England*, nor (which was more admirable) the leading Men, in petty *Boroughs* and *Corporations*, to give their Consent, that such Men shou'd be chosen Members of *Parliament* as wou'd repeal those *Laws*. How chearfully did they part with the most profitable, and the most honourable Employments,



ployments, rather than deny their God, and betray their Country? When the then Archbishop of *Canterbury*, with Six of his Suffragans, were sent to the *Tower* for Petitioning His Majesty, that the Clergy might not publish the Proclamation for *Liberty of Conscience*, because that *Liberty of Conscience* cou'd not be granted without dispensing with Laws then in Force; what Unanimity, and what Zeal, appeared throughout the Kingdom upon that Occasion? When those Excellent Prelates were brought to a Publick Tryal at *Westminster-Hall*, for standing up for the Laws and Liberties of their Country, What an appearance of the greatest of *our Nobility*, and of the most considerable of *our Gentry*, was there in Court to back them? In short, an universal steadiness appear'd among all Orders and Ranks of Men, and that steadiness did by the Blessing of God at last preserve us.

The Clergy too acted as became them in that Conjunction. They were nearest to Danger, and they shrunk not from it. In *London*, where the Court was, and where the Infection was the likeliest to spread, they did almost universally,

verſally, from the greateſt to the leaſt,  
*in Season, and out of Season, rebuke,*  
*exhort, teach, admoniſh, conſer, and*  
*preſs upon their People, to worſhip God*  
*according to that Form of ſound Do-*  
*ctrine, which was once deliver'd to the*  
*Saints.* Wherever the Enemy appear'd,  
 they met him. If he labour'd to ſe-  
 duce any of their Flock, they oppoſed  
 him Face to Face; And with that Firm-  
 neſs, which Truth and Juſtice, a righte-  
 ous Cauſe and a clear Conſcience, only  
 can inſpire, they detected the Falla-  
 cies, and expoſ'd the Impudence and  
 the Ignorance of their Adverſaries. No-  
 thing from the Preſs was unanſwer'd;  
 and very few of our Writers conceal'd  
 their Names, even at the very Time,  
 tho' they did not always ſet them in the  
*Title Pages of their Books.* The Truth  
 is, there was then an excellent Set  
 of Men in the Church; Men of great  
 Sanctity, and great Prudence; of great  
 Learning, and great Moderation; zea-  
 lous for the Faith, and thoroughly able  
 to defend it: And what crown'd all, they  
 did every thing with admirable Wiſdom  
 and Temper; ſtill preſerving a Senſe of  
 the Duty which they ow'd their Sove-  
 reign, taking care in their Diſcourſes,  
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their Sermons, and their Writings, to shew that it was *Faith*, and not *Faction*, that guided them in what they did. Such a Set of Church-men there was then in the City, in the Universities, and in most of the great Towns of the Kingdom, as one wou'd wish to find in the Day of Tryal and Extremity ; and when we shall see the like again, God only knows.

Whereas now if we examine the present *State of the Nation*, we shall in a great Measure see the Reverse of this. Our Nobility and Gentry are miserably divided : One Party are jealous lest the other shou'd deliver them up to the common Enemy. Whilst all pretend equal Duty to Her Majesty, neither Side seems enough to care how much the Wheels of the Publick are clogg'd ; so those whom they wou'd ruin, and who perhaps had defeated them before, are disappointed. Among the Clergy this is still worse. The *inferior Clergy* in all the Counties of *England*, have for many Years been industriously animated against most of their *Bishops*, and they have been taught to look upon them, as *Betrayers* of their *Church*, and Deliverers of their Constitution up to the



the *Presbyterians* : And this for no other Reason, but because they have not sometimes *voted* in the *House of Lords* as their *Lay-Friends*, by whom they have been guided, could have wish'd. In short, these *Lay-friends* of theirs have us'd them as Instruments of their private Revenges, to carry on their particular Purposes ; whilst they have been made to believe, that they were all the while Preaching, and Talking, and Voting, for the Church.

This, Sir, you well know is a short Sketch of our present State. If this *Treaty* shou'd not have its desir'd Effect, and the *French King* shou'd at last gain by a Peace, what he has not been able to get by the War, and any Disgust or Misunderstanding should arise between Us and our Allies ; Are we united enough, if we shou'd judge it necessary to oppose him ? I fear not. No *Englishman*, who loves his Country, and knows what *Popery* is, but is satisfy'd, that Confusion and Slavery, both Religious and Civil, must attend the setting a *Prince* upon the *British Throne*, who has been bred in *France* ; taught from his Infancy to look upon us as a perfidious and rebellious People ; and thorough-  
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ly bigotted to his Religion. And yet you may commonly hear Men say, they had rather obey a *Popish Prince*, than a *Presbyterian*. I say, I wou'd willingly obey neither ; and *Lutherans* are very widely distant from *Presbyterians*. But were that the Option, (which wou'd be a very melancholy one for the *Church of England*) is there no Difference between a *Religion*, which depends upon a *Foreign Power* ; which claims *Infallibility* ; which has always labour'd to support it self, and to gain *Profelites*, by the cruellest, and the most inhumane *Methods* ; which has superadded the vilest *Idolatry*, and the basest *Superstition*, to that plain and simple Scheme of *Christianity* which was laid down by *Jesus Christ*, and deliver'd to us by his *Disciples* ; and between a *Religion* which agrees with us in all the *fundamental Articles* of our Faith, and disagrees from us only in the *Methods* of *Governing* the *Church* ? Surely Men understand not what they say, or have little Regard to that Holy System of their Faith, which is to be found in the *New Testament*, when they speak thus.

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These are the Dangers which in such a Case might threaten us. We trust, and are confident, that Her Majesty and Her Ministers, will take effectual care, as far as Humane Prudence can reach, to prevent them. I say not this, therefore, to instil Fears into your Mind, and I know you are too good a Subject to instill them into the Minds of other Men. But I cannot, without Sorrow, observe, that Men seem to have forgot what *Poper*y is; and the Fears which 22 Years ago sunk us all, seem now to have scarce any manner of Influence upon us. *Poper*y is, what it always was, a cruel, restless, inexorable Religion. The Destruction of the *Northern Heresie* is what the Court of Rome has always had, and will always have at Heart. *Great Britain* is now, and has ever been since the Reformation, the greatest Obstacle to that Design. The inhuman Persecutions of the *Protestants of France*, which are not yet at an End, shew the *French King's* good Intentions to promote the Interests of *Holy Church* in its own beloved way. There is nothing in the History of the Ten first Persecutions of the *Christians*, under the *Pagan Emperors* before *Constantine the Great*,



*Great*, which can equal the *Methods* of *Conversion*, that have been practis'd by *Lewis the Great*. Those *Lentæ Maxillæ*, as *Augustus* said of *Tiberius*, are more terrible than the quickest Violence, and the utmost Force. And Men that cou'd joyfully and readily lay down their Lives at a Stake, will faint under those Dungeons, and Gallies, and Bastinado's, under which many illustrious Martyrs and Confessors have perish'd, and do still groan. That these are not old Stories, appears from Mr. *Bion's* *Accounts of the Sufferings of these Confessors in the Gallies*; and from the *History of the Martyrdom of Mons. de Marolles*, just publish'd by the Excellent Dr. *Bray*. Once more; Let us not deceive our selves: *Poperij* is what it always was, and what it ever will and must be, as long as there are *Protestants* in Countries where *Papists* think they have the upper hand.

You will ask me then, in case what we are unwilling to fear, and what we know Her Majesty will, if possible, prevent, shou'd ever happen; that *Spain* and the *West Indies*, shou'd upon a Peace, be left in King *Philip's* Hands, and that thereby *France* shou'd so far recover

ver Strength, as to be able to dispute its Title to an *Universal Monarchy* in *Europe*, with the rest of *Christendom*; What will be the most likely means, next under the Providence of God, to prevent those Evils, and to keep the *French King* from giving Laws to his Neighbours? I know but one, but that is an effectual one; which is, To stifle those Animosities, and to compose those Divisions, which do now so fatally rend us to Pieces. And as this will certainly do it, so Things of late seem to have taken a happy Turn towards it.

The common Enemies to our Church are the *Papists*, and the *Dissenters*. They act indeed with different Views, and upon different Measures; but still they are Enemies to the *Episcopal Church of England*; which alone is the Establish'd Church, and which alone has a Title to that Name. The Members of the *Episcopal Church* are divided into two *Parties*, known by the Name of *High Church*, and *Low Church*; and of these either Side has accused the other, the one of favouring the Interests of the *Presbyterians*, the other those of the *Pretender*. Now it has pleased God, that this Winter both *Parties* have happily

pily concurred in such Measures, as may, if rightly improved, free us in time from the fear of both. A truly *Great Man* of the other Side, declared at the opening of this *Sessions* with great Zeal, and that hearty Concern for his Country, (which those who have had the Honour to be known to him, knew all along to be an essential part of his Character) against delivering *Spain* and the *West Indies* to the House of *Bourbon*, without the Consent of the *High Allies*. The *Low-Church Party* were willing to take this Occasion, of giving an undeniable Proof of their Fidelity to the Church of *England*. Accordingly, when that *Great Man* brought the *Occasional Bill* under another Title, into the *House of Lords*, they all unanimously joyn'd with him in it; and so that *Bill*, which had like to have produced such fatal Effects Seven Years ago, past both *Houses* with surprizing speed, and without any Opposition. This took off the Calumny which the *Low-Church Party* had long lain under, of endeavouring to overturn the Church of *England*. The *Tories* likewise, in their Thanks to Her Majesty for her late *Speech* and *Message*, and in several



veral other Instances, have given evident Proofs of their Affection to the *House of Hanover*, and of their Willingness to join in any thing which may secure their Right against a proper time. This, if Men mean honestly, is, on both Sides, what *Englishmen* wou'd have. The *Dissenters* have their *Toleration* secur'd; they are at ease in their Property, and in the Exercise of their Worship, tho' they are kept out of the *Government*; and the *Protestant Succession*, which concerns them as much as it does us, is secur'd. All beyond this, is only what particular Set of Men shall be at the Helm; which so long as the *Constitution* is secure in these *Essential* and *Fundamental Parts*, is to private Men of small Concern. Mutual Peace and Agreement is of incomparably greater Moment, and what every Man in his respective Station may go some Way at least to promote.

Those therefore who were so jealous of the *Whigs* heretofore, may now be satisfy'd. Were they never so desirous to break in upon our *Constitution* either in *Church* or *State*, they can do no harm, unless the *Tories* give them leave; and whether they wou'd formerly have  
 down'd broken

broken into it, this late Act of theirs does pretty plainly shew : At least, we are sure of their Proceedings now. Nay, though we might formerly have had just Reason to be afraid of them, though we cou'd not with any Safety have believ'd their Protestations; yet now, since they have voluntarily and unanimously agree'd to tye up the *Dissenters* Hands, (and their own too if you please) we shall, I fear, be very sorry Friends to our Country, if we refuse their Assistance in what may at any time conduce to its Peace. Nay farther, had they been declared Enemies to their Church and Country formerly, yet this Act ought to reconcile us to them; and instead of searching into their Hearts, wherein we may be mistaken, we ought to be determined by their Actions, in which there can be no Fallacy; especially since we are all *Englishmen*, and must all at last sink or swim in the same Botrom.

But there is one Step farther to be taken still. That is, to engage the *Clergy*, if that can possibly be done, to agree better among themselves, and to put a greater *Trust* and *Confidence* in their *Bishops*. That Mistrust of the *Low-Church*

*Church-Bishops*, which has been so industriously cultivated in the Minds of the *inferior Clergy*, by some who found their Ends in making them believe, that their *Bishops* were many of them *Presbyterians* in their Hearts, and ready to betray the *Church of England*, if an Opportunity, offer'd to the *Dissenters*; was first set on Foot, by the *Jacobites* and *Non-Jurors*, soon after the *Revolution*. That they should treat all those of the Clergy, who heartily closed in with the Interest of *K. William III.* as *Rebels* and *Fanaticks*, was no wonder; since many of them carry'd their Opposition so far, that they actually separated from our Church, after the See's of those *Bishops*, who were deprived for not taking the *Oath of Allegiance* to *King William* and *Queen Mary*, were fill'd up. I question whether ever any handful of Men merited more of the *Church of England*, by any single Act, since the *Reformation*, than those excellent Prelates did, who accepted of those *Bishopricks*, so declar'd vacant at that time. The great personal Merit of the deprived *Bishops*; the late eminent Service which several of them had done to their Country in *K. James the II.'s* Reign; the Cause its self

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for



for which they suffer'd; (which seem'd to very many to be the Cause of the *Church of England* itself,) and the Commiseration of the People towards good Men, who left such great, and honourable, and advantageous Posts, purely for their Consciences; made it not a very desirable Thing to Men of Character and Merit, to venture to fill their Places. The *Jacobite* Interest was then truly formidable; and the Revolution was green, and had taken but little Root. Yet then did those excellent Men venture to accept of those Employments, in which they could not but expect to meet with Opposition, at least with Coldness, from the *inferior Clergy*; of whom a great Majority did almost adore their depriv'd *Bishops*. Of the complying Clergy, great Numbers (it is to be feared) took the Oaths against their Wills. We, who conversed among them freely at that Time, perceived a great deal of it; we lamented it, and tho' we could not exactly tell what Mischiefs, the ill Blood then caused, might afterwards produce, yet that it would produce a great deal we foretold, and our Prophecy is but too truly come to pass.

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On the other side, when once the *Act for Deprivation*, in Case of Refusal to take the *Oaths*, was past, the Government was under an unavoidable Necessity of putting it in Execution. The Wound which this gave to the *Church* in the *House of Lords*, was manifest. The *Votes* of so many *Bishops* were wanting. It was soon whisper'd, and afterwards loudly talk'd, that the Court durst not fill up those Sees; and if they attempted to fill them up, that no Men of Worth would take them. This made it still more necessary to find out Men of known Merit, of Piety, of Learning, and of Prudence, fit for those Posts, to fill them. And such Men they found, who to their immortal Honour ventur'd, in that ticklish Conjunction, to accept of those Employments, (they could not at that Time well be call'd Preferments) under those discouraging Circumstances.

If these Men afterwards, when they acted in their Political Capacities, as *Barons* as well as *Bishops*, in the *House of Lords*; adhered with the rest of *K. William's Bishops*, to what they thought was his Interest, in Contradistinction to the *Court of St. Germain's*; can we in the

least wonder at them? They had acted like Madmen, or something worse, if they had acted otherwise. In *K. William's* Time there were great Numbers of complying *Jacobites*, who since his Death have given the World Reason to hope, that they will stand by the present Establishment. Those that lov'd the *Revolution* in *K. William's* Time, knew it was their Interest, and their Duty, to oppose these Men in their respective Stations. This brought on most part of the ill-usage which *K. William's Bishops*, who in a few Years were forc'd (for their common Security) to keep together, met with in the *Parliament House*; from whence it was by degrees dispers'd throughout the Nation. On the other side, as it was natural for the *Whigg Lords* to care for them, at the same Time that for other Reasons they care'd the *Dissenters*; so this gave a Handle for the designing Men to mislead the Thoughtless: And then because the same Men who courted these *Bishops*, courted the *Dissenters* likewise, therefore immediately by *postulate Illation* (as our Friend *Hudibras* says) it was roundly affirmed, that these *Bishops* were fast Friends to the *Dissenters*, and ready,



dy, upon the first fair Opportunity, to betray the Church to Men, who were known to be its profess'd Enemies.

This was the only Crime of these *Bishops*. For in the Exercise of their *Episcopal Functions* in their *Dioceses*, they had all along been blameless, tho' one would think that should have been the proper Test by which to judge whether they were true to that Church, of which they were appointed Governors, or no. This Ill-will against them, has in the present Reign been industriously, and artfully fomented, in all Parts of the Kingdom. An Accident happen'd the first Winter after Her Majesty's Happy Accession to the Throne, which unfortunately made this Misunderstanding wider. The *Occasional Bill* was then brought into the *House of Commons*, and manag'd there, and in the *House of Lords*, with great Art, and Heat, and Violence. Several of the *Bishops* voted then against it. This immediately raised a Clamor, which many well-meaning, but undiscerning Men, ran away with. The Cry was, That the *Low Church Bishops* were betraying us to the *Presbyterians*. From what has happen'd since, it manifestly appears, that those

those who rais'd this Cry were mistaken; and there were such Reasons at that Time to oppose the *Bill*, that wise and good Men might easily be led by them, and justify themselves afterwards, in owning that they were led by them, without acting in concert with the *Dissenters*. The Nation was newly then involv'd in a War, heavier and more terrible, than the former; and that after a Respite, only of a Four-Years-Peace. *K. William* was lately dead: The *Allies* had but little Experience of their new *General*: The *Dissenters* were a rich Body of Men, and many believ'd their Strength to be greater than really it was: They were able to contribute largely towards the War, and they shew'd great Willingness to assist their Fellow-Subjects in that Particular. They look'd upon this *Bill* as a Battery upon the Outworks of the *Toleration*, and in the Posture things were then in, many People believ'd that they did not judge much amiss. Those therefore who reason'd after this manner, (whether right or wrong it matters not at present) had a very great deal to say for themselves, at such a Juncture. Yet what a Clamor this caused, you well remember; and

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*Lesley*, (a declared *Non-Juror*;) with his *stripped Wolves*, his *Cassandra's*, and his *Rebearfals*, was perpetually blowing up the Coals; and what he said was greedily imbibed by many an honest Man; who at the bottom was a Friend to the *Protestant Succession*, and who was not aware of the Design which that *Incendiary* carry'd on.

But, God be praised, this stumbling Block is now remov'd; and the *Low-Church-Bishops* were as active to remove it, when a proper time was come, as any Men whatsoever. This is not the only Instance in which they, as Members of the *House of Lords*, have steadily adhered to the true Interests of that Church, of which they are appointed Overseers. I shall instance in another, and that was the Case of *Mr. Greenshields*; in which the *House of Lords*, after receiving it, did to their Honour, as became a *Judicatory*, who were hearty Members of our *Episcopal Church*, deliver him from the barbarous Persecution of his bigotted Countrymen. The Case is not commonly well understood, and therefore you will give me leave to state it at length; and then you will better see wherein the Merit of those worthy *Pre-lates*



lates consisted ; who stood by him, and in so doing serv'd the *Church of England* at the same time. And you may believe me, when I assure you, that I shall say nothing in this Matter, but what I have certain Information to warrant.

Mr. *Greenshield's* Case in short was this. In the Year 1708. he was convened before the *Presbytery of Edinburgh*, for Preaching and Reading the *English Service* within that *Presbytery*. He appear'd, but declin'd their Authority; and refus'd to obey their Order, by which they defended him (as the *Scotch* call it) to preach or read Prayers any more within the Limits of their *Presbytery*. Mr. *Greenshields* however goes on, as before: The *Presbytery* hereupon call in the *Magistrates of Edinburgh* to their assistance, desiring them to make their Sentence effectual. The *Magistrates* at their Request summon'd Mr. *Greenshields* before them; and charg'd him not to preach, or read Prayers, according to the *English Liturgy*, upon Pain of Imprisonment. However he went on still, and for his Contumacy (for so it was esteem'd) he was imprison'd. Mr. *Greenshields* hereupon appeal'd to the *Lords of the Session*, against the Proceedings of the *Magistrates* of

of Edinburgh, and the *Lords of the Session* confirm the Sentence of the *Magistrates*, and leave him in Prison.

That Winter he appeal'd to the *House of Lords*, from the *Lords of the Session*. The *Lords* at first consider'd it as an *Ecclesiastical Cause*, and that occasion'd two Doubts : One, Whether the Cause was cognizable before them, because of the Terms of the Union in that particular ; and the Other, which was the greater Difficulty of the two, Whether they could meddle with the Case at all ; since in *Ecclesiastical Causes* in *England* no Appeal lies to the *Lords*, but only to the *Delegates*, who are the *Dernier Resort* in Cases of this Nature ; and in *Scotland* Appeals lie regularly from the *Presbytery* to the *Synod*, and from the *Synod* to the *General Assembly*. This they said was the Course which *Mr. Greenshields* should have taken, and there that Business was to end. The *Lords* hereupon divided in their Opinions ; and it was carry'd, That the whole Process should be return'd up, and laid before the *House*, and that *Mr. Greenshields* himself should come

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up with it, to satisfy the Lords in what they had to ask of him.

Pursuant to this Decree of the Lords, Mr. Greenshields comes up; and the next Winter, early in the Session, his Cause was heard. A great Lord of the Low-Church Party open'd the Cause, and shew'd, that what came before their Lordships, was not the *Fall* of the *Presbytery*, but of the *Magistrates of Edinburgh*, and of the *Lords of the Session*; and that the sole Question was, Whether the One had duly imprison'd Mr. Greenshields, and the other had rightly confirm'd their Proceedings? He desir'd therefore that the Council might be order'd in their Pleadings on both Sides, to meddle only with what was *Civil*, and not to wander into any Powers, or Proceedings, *Ecclesiastical*. Herein some of the Low-Church Bishops labour'd exceedingly, and engag'd the other Bishops, and Temporal Lords of that side, to stand by Mr. Greenshields. This was an inestimable advantage to the Church: It is perhaps the greatest Security to that small Remainder of Power that is left in the *Ecclesiastical Courts*, that ultimate Ap-  
peals



*zeals* in Causes cognizable before them, do not lie before the *House of Lords*, but before that *Court of Delegates*. For tho' no Man has a greater Reverence for the August Body, or would more chearfully acquiesce in their Determination in Civil Matters than my self; yet I am afraid, if *Appeals* lay to that *House* from the *Spiritual Courts*, it would very much weaken that Power, small as it is, which they yet retain of punishing such Offences as properly come before them. And tho' it may be said, that this Case related only to *Appeals* from *Scottish Presbyteries*, and *Synods*, and *Assemblies*, and not to *English Courts of Arch-Deacons*, and *Bishops*; yet since, by the *Union*, Ecclesiastical Discipline, as such, is secur'd to the *Scottish Presbytery*, it is to be fear'd, if an *Inroad* had been once made there, a Time might come, when this Case of *Mr. Greenshields* might be made a Precedent at home; and then every Man that had Money and Stomach, would early begin to make his Applications to a Body of Men, the Majority of whom, may, without any Disrespect, be supposed not to understand

Matters of that Nature quite so well as a select Court of *Delegates*. But to return: When the *Low-Church Bishops* had with great Pains labour'd, that this Cause should not be look'd upon as a Cause *Ecclesiastical*, wherein they were warmly assisted by the *Lay Lords*, their Friends; the Question in short came to be this; Whether there was any *Statute*, or *Law* in *Scotland*, that empower'd the *Civil Magistrate* to imprison Mr. *Greenshields*, for using the *English Service*? And it was unanimously resolv'd, after a long Debate, and a full hearing of the Cause, that there was NONE. The *Presbytery* might, if they pleas'd, proceed by *Ecclesiastical Censures*; the *Synods* and *Assemblies* might afterwards also, if they pleas'd, confirm those *Censures*; but the *Civil Magistrate* had nothing to do to meddle with those Matters. Mr. *Greenshields* hereupon was discharg'd, and the Consequence was agreed to, That any *Episcopal Clergyman* might read the *Common Prayer*, and preach in *Scotland*, without danger of Civil Punishment; if he were but duly qualify'd, by taking the Oaths, and giving such Security to the Govern-

Government, as by Law he ought to do. This was agreed to by the Lords unanimously in the House upon that Occasion.

This great Determination was in good measure owing to the Industry, Address, and Management, of the *Low-Church Bishops*. Judge you now, if such Men ought to be accused, or even suspected, of being false, to the Rights, Powers, and Privileges of their own Order. I am unwilling to touch upon the Divisions between the two *Houses of Convocation*, because they have been carry'd on only between themselves. Posterity will be the best Judges, who have been the *truest Friends to Episcopacy*, the *Upper House*, or the *Lower*. I hope to live to see Men's Minds cool enough, to judge impartially of that Matter. When once that Day comes, which God Almighty hasten, if it be his blessed Will; Clergymen will then be asham'd to reflect, that they have been (I hope unwittingly) carrying on the Cause of *Presbytery*, against those whom they call'd *Presbyterian Bishops*; who, to preserve the Prerogatives of an *Episco-*  
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pal Church, have born with such Usage as was never, perhaps, since the *Apostles* Time, given by *Presbyters*, to those whom they own'd to be their lawful Bishops.

But I find I grow warm. The Truth is, the Cause seems to require it. But as King *William* said, to a great Minister upon another Occasion, *Exposulations rarely succeed well with Friends, though they often do with Lovers*; and therefore I shall say no more upon this Head. Our Business is to forget, and to forgive: And if those of the *inferior Clergy*, who formerly opposed their *Bishops*, will but return to their Duty, I am willing to think, that what is pass'd will be intirely pass'd over. What we have to do now, is to follow after the Things which belong to our Peace. The *Clergy* have it in their Power at this time, to do a very great deal of good. Union among themselves, and a steady Adherence to, and Reverence for their *Bishops*, will make them truly Great; and let what Peace forever be made, they will then find their Hands strengthened to carry on the great Design, which they are set here to execute, with Honour

Honour and Success. It is undoubtedly Her Majesty's Prerogative to make Peace, or to continue the War ; but since her People must bear the Burthen, and since their future Happiness or Misery, will in a great Measure depend upon what is now done, She has Graciously promised to lay this whole Matter before Her Parliament, that they may both see Her Love to Her People, and assist her in making the Effects of that Love lasting and secure for many Generations. And since, as She observ'd to her Parliament at the opening of this Sessions, that in the course of so long a War, great Mismanagements must unavoidably have crept into several Parts of the Administration ; it will be impossible to redress them, unless those Divisions which now distract us, be in some measure quieted. And it will not be possible to quiet them, unless both Parties can be brought to lay aside their mutual Rancour. And by this Rancour, when once there is a Peace, if it is kept up, we shall unavoidably fall a-pieces among our selves ; nay, I cannot tell, whether the better the Peace,  
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the sooner our intestine Flames may not break out, if we take no care to extinguish them ; since when we have no foreign Enemy to be afraid of, we may look upon our selves as the more at leisure to wreak our private Revenues at Home. But let us hope for better Things : That the best of *Queens* may have the blessed Satisfaction of seeing that PEACE, which She so much longs for, bring Quiet and Ease, as well as Plenty and Wealth, to her People. What may we not hope from her Prayers and her Wishes ? The *Gentlemen* of *England* sure will not be so mad, when once they have got a Peace, as to suffer their Fears of one another to produce such direful Effects, as will be worse than a foreign War ; but will set in good earnest about that great Work, of making us feel the desired Effects of what we look for from it. If the *Clergy* do not perform their Parts, they will be inexcusable to God and the World : They would take it very ill to be told, that they want Information in a Thing of this Kind, and that Men, whose Profession it is to *preach up the Gospel of Peace*, cou'd be imagin'd to be



be deficient in so important a Part of their Duty. The great stumbling Block is now remov'd : They see their *Bishops* do what lyes in them to preserve, as well as govern the Church. If they, by an unanimous Obedience, strengthen the Hands of their Superiours, they will go much farther than they may perhaps imagine towards making us a Glorious and a Happy People.

Before I conclude, I cannot but express my Satisfaction for one part of Her Majesty's late Message to Her Parliament, which is, *That the great License which is taken in publishing false and scandalous Libels, is a Reproach to any Government.* She truly observes, *That this Evil seems to be grown too strong for the Laws now in force,* and therefore She recommends it to them to find a Remedy equal to the Mischief. The Thing is true, and I rejoyce to see Her Majesty complain of it. Had it been complain'd of some Years ago, it might have prevented that Torrent of *Blasphemy, Heresie, and Sedition*, with which we have been almost overwhelm'd. Till this Remedy is apply'd, it will be in vain to talk of *Peace at Home*, what-

soever we may have *Abroad*, whilst every little Scribler in his *Penny Papers* (I wish I cou'd call them *Merryments*) is setting us together by the Ears. Whilst under the Pretence of publishing *News*, and spreading *Advertisements of Trade and Business*; Our *Allies* are insulted, their *Ministers* abused, our own *Nobility* ridicul'd; the gravest and the wisest Men in the Nation dress'd up in *Fools Coats*, like *Criminals* in the *Inquisition*, to be baited at by the Mob. Whilst puny Writers under a shew of *Examining* and *Enquiring* into the *Mismanagements* of the *Publick*, shall treat Men that have successfully serv'd their Country and its *Allies*, and have led their *Armies* to certain *Victory*, against an *Enemy*, at whose Name before, all *Europe* trembl'd, as *publick Robbers*, that deserve to be hang'd more than those poor *Rogues*, the *Criminals* at the *Old-Baily*, who are *Whipp'd* or *Hang'd* as they are found *Guilty* to the *Value* of 10 d. or 13 d. and this because they, like *Pompey the Great*, have *ROBBED* with fifty Thousand Men. (See *Examiner* Jan. 24. 1711.) Whilst others, that appear to lay

lay before Her Majesty, a *Representation from Her Loyal Subjects*, of their Wants and Grievances, tell Her, That Men ought to be accountable with their Heads, since their having been, perhaps, once fortunate, and by chance serviceable to their Country, ought not to atone for other Crimes. And that though it may be Mercy, perhaps, to grant an **Highway-man** his Pardon, yet it is but Justice to deliver a **Plunderer** of the Publick, an universal **Robber** of his Country, to the severest Punishment. (vid. *Represent. of Loyal Subjects of Albinia*, pag. 8, 9.) This is the Language of St. Germans, and serves to no other purpose, but to promote the Interest of that Court. But Her Majesty is thoroughly sensible of this flagrant Mischief; I hope our *Representatives* will be so too. They have formerly found Remedies to what one would judge to be much greater Evils; and the Readiness which this *House of Commons* has all along shewn to comply with Her Majesty's Inclinations, will not suffer us to doubt, but this Grievance will soon be redress'd. When that is done, we may hope, that the  
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still and gentle Admonitions of those that labour to promote PEACE at Home, whilst Her Majesty endeavours to procure to us an Honourable and a Lasting PEACE ABROAD, may be attended to; and when once Men come to that Temper, the Work is as good as done.

These, SIR, are my Thoughts, and the Thoughts of those whose Judgment you value most, upon the present State of Things. Excuse my Length, and believe me to be sincerely,

Feb. 11.  
1711.



*Your very affectionate Friend*

*and Servant.*

M. N.